



WINNING WAYS

MANUFACTURING TECHNOLOGY



Fireproof success

“The great thing about CRCs is that they ensure industry is involved in new technology from day one”

Dr Ian Dagley, Chief Executive, CRC for Polymers

The electrical cable which hardens under fire, using plastics technology developed by the Cooperative Research Centre for Polymers (CRC-P), has been a major commercial success for Olex Australia Pty Ltd. Pyrolex™ Ceramifiable® was launched by Olex in July 2003 and has been used in many major commercial developments, such as the redeveloped Melbourne Cricket Ground and Melbourne’s Austin hospital. The new cable insulation dispenses with the need for expensive mineral-filled glass tape, is faster to install and, most importantly, maintains electricity supply in the event of a fire. In a hospital, for example, this means life-saving machinery continues to function and the lights stay on in the operating theatre.

Olex approached the CRC-P with the idea for “a novel fire performance cable requiring new materials science,” says CRC-P Chief Executive Dr Ian Dagley. “This was an ideal product for our CRC as we have access to some of the best polymer researchers in Australia.”

The CRC-P has developed and commercialised several other technologies – indeed every company which was a partner in the CRC in 2005 has gained a licensed, commercialised product as a result. Examples include SOLA, which licensed CRC-P technology in May 2005 to produce a new range of sun lenses, and Orica, which licensed CRC-P technology for making plastic compounds for use in other cable products (cellular insulation and sheathing materials).

\$16.6m revenue and rising

Sales of polymer cable products based on CRC-P research (Pyrolex™ Ceramifiable®, and Orica’s cellular insulation and sheathing materials) have generated gross revenues of \$16.6m since their first commercial use.

The CRC’s research has also spawned a spin-off company, Ceram Polymerik, which is utilising the same polymer research to produce fireproof door and window seals. The company gained an additional \$2m venture capital funding in 2006 to commercialise the technology, following

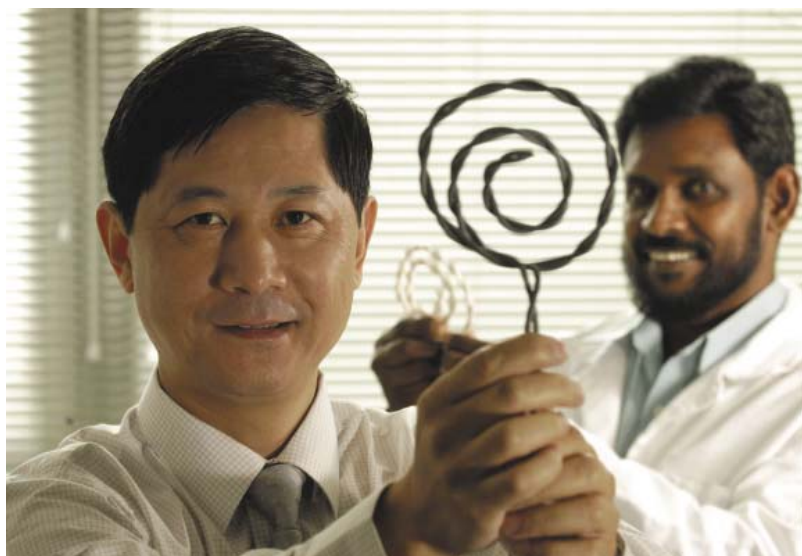
the \$1.55m contributed by Starfish Ventures in 2004.

“We were impressed by the core technology that CRC for Polymers has developed and the high-calibre international companies wanting to partner with Ceram Polymerik,” says Nick Pearce, Investment Manager for Starfish.

With the overall market for polymer products worth \$8bn annually, the CRC’s work will continue to produce success stories. The CRC-P aims to help the small to medium-sized plastics manufacturing plants in Australia by providing links between them and researchers. As Dr Dagley says, “The great thing about CRCs is that they ensure industry is involved in new technology from day one, and that the technology has a market.”

Overall the nation is \$1.14bn better off, or 60 cents wealthier for every dollar invested by the Australian Government in the CRC Programme.

The Allen Consulting Group



Success with the ceramifiable cable

For further information visit the CRC for Polymers: www.crcp.com.au

Visit: www.crc.gov.au or www.crca.asn.au **Call:** 1300 363 079 or 02 6240 5011 **Email:** crc.program@dest.gov.au